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TECHNIQUES OF RESEARCH
MORAL LEADERSHIP

FRANK B. REAVES
CHAPLAIN (MAJOR) UNITED STATES ARMY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This paper is an attempt to better inform the readers on the nature of the moral and ethical aspects of leadership within the Army with some thought to the teaching of moral and ethical aspects of leadership in service and the role of the chaplain in these matters.

We have only to look at certain happenings in the last few years to recognize the need for some changes in Army leadership, not to mention leadership in our total society. We need only to point out the recent charges at My Lai or against a general officer in Europe or against the former Sergeant Major of the Army to recognize a need for moral leadership, ethical leadership or professional ethics. We have had and now have this potential. It only needs to be taught.

Leadership in its proper sense was displayed when General Dwight D. Eisenhower said to a worried, nervous soldier in Europe, "You and I are a good pair. . . . Maybe if we just walk along together to the river we'll be good for each other."¹ General Eisenhower felt that "mutual

¹Edgar F. Puryear, Jr., Nineteen Stars (Orange, Va.: Green Publishers, Inc., 1971), p. 226.

confidence"² was a necessity and "neglect or indifference"³
must be dispelled from officers in leadership. Of General
George C. Marshall it was noted that: "His success as a leader
was the culmination of over forty years of study and prepara-
tion."⁴

²Ibid., p. 230.

³Ibid., p. 231.

⁴Ibid., p. 101.

CHAPTER II

MORAL LEADERSHIP DEFINED

When we use the term moral leadership, what do we mean?

Modern technology, with its advanced weapon systems and its potential for mass destruction and tremendous costs, places an increasingly heavy load of responsibility on the military to perform its functions in accordance with the ethical and moral rules of society and of the profession. Behavior which by a business executive might be reprehensive, or by a student might be frowned upon, can be considered criminal among the military community. Lives, money, and even national policy can depend on accurate reports and honest statements. Coloring the truth for personal gain or to obtain temporary advantage can lead to results unforeseen by the perpetrator. Above all, minor prevarications lay the foundations for major ones later on, and lead to the growth of doubt and suspicion among associates. A profession into whose care a substantial portion of the nation's wealth and manpower is entrusted can be quickly destroyed by any doubt of its integrity or motives.⁵

Major General DeWitt C. Smith defined moral leadership as human concern, warmth, communication, sensitivity, integrity and listening.⁶ Leadership has also been defined as professional guidance.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Leadership Development Program encompasses all variables of the leader, group, and situation. The program includes

⁵U.S., Department of the Army, Command and General Staff College, Leadership and Management Course, "Military Ethics," (Summer 1973), Lesson 1, p. 15.

⁶During meeting of the Moral Leadership Conference, Fort Hamilton, New York, October 1973.

education in:

1. Self-awareness of one's personality, ability and need to adapt to the leadership climate;
2. Understanding of society's changing values and those aspects of leadership that have the greatest impact upon today's soldier;
3. The need for leadership that is flexible in technique and personal in application;
4. Understanding of motivational techniques and the factors contributing to job satisfaction;
5. The constraints placed on the individual's behavior by a large bureaucratic organization;
6. Understanding of variable styles in the proper application of leadership principles;
7. Understanding of the interchange of expectations in the informal contract between leader and the subordinate;
8. Understanding of effective counseling techniques;
9. Understanding of the importance of interpersonal communication;
10. Specific techniques useful in dealing with contemporary leadership problems.⁷

Instilling high standards of professional ethics in our officer corps requires constant effort, good example, frequent instruction, and complete dedication. The task of adapting our individualistic, achievement-minded youth to the disciplined, group-oriented, mission-conscious environment of a military society is no simple one. . . . Those who might sympathize with the transgressions of these youths and who feel that their mistakes might be condoned, fail to

⁷ Ibid.

realize that the pattern set while young forecasts later performance when these people will be loaded with grave responsibilities and exposed to great temptations.⁸

Note the emphasis on the importance of moral leadership. Yet G. C. Field asked the question: "What is moral philosophy or ethics?"⁹ He concludes that "perhaps there is no absolutely conclusive answer to be given."¹⁰ But then what difference will it make to us in practice since we cannot make a pronouncement as to what constitutes a moral theory or define ethics.¹¹ Let us continue to try, nonetheless, for we cannot afford to relax the standards of professional ethics in any way, if we retain an effective military structure which the American people can support and trust. We must demand high standards for ourselves and those about us. Duties must be performed to the utmost of our ability, our word must be bond and of these we must be sure. "Only by setting the best examples we know how to set and by requiring our subordinates to do likewise, can we pass on to our successors the heritage handed down by our forefathers: a respected profession, worthy of a nation's trust."¹² This is much harder to do than to say. Yet when faced with complicated situations in politics, personality and duties surrounding leaders, we realize that moral predicaments are not new. Man has faced them since time began.

⁸U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, Leadership and Management Course.

⁹G. C. Field, Moral Theory (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1921), p. 1.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 13. ¹¹Ibid., pp. 192-193.

¹²U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, Leadership and Management Course.

"Any moral scheme must include doing something and being responsible . . . under the same moral principle."¹³ Bernard Häring states that moral responsibility relates to freedom and obedience.¹⁴

It has been suggested that we deal not with moral leadership but with honesty and fairness. Moral responsibility has been defined as what I should be before I aspire to lead. Some definitions of moral leadership are: development of the capacity to make moral decisions; leading with service to others--those you lead--as the main thrust; how you relate to the expectations of others; our action in response to others, action which is accountable and answers responsibility; the just, fair, honest and consistent use of authority, which is responsible both to the mission and to those led; and emphasis on self-growth, self-evaluation and human relations.¹⁵

History has much to say about the natural conduct and prospects of man. In this light, moral leadership should stand above power.¹⁶ "In the arena of human conflict and interaction, a moral or ethical code can be likened to a position you are defending."¹⁷ As you attempt to gain and hold

¹³ John Casey, ed., Morality and Moral Reasoning (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1971), p. 161.

¹⁴ Bernard Häring, Christian Maturity (New York: Herder & Herder, 1967), pp. 49-51.

¹⁵ During meeting of Moral Leadership Conference.

¹⁶ Will Durant and Ariel Durant, The Lessons of History (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968), p. 35.

¹⁷ U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, Leadership and Management Course.

ground in a military endeavor, likewise "when a person's moral position is breached, his forward defenses overrun, he must counterattack to regain that position or if necessary seek outside help."¹⁸

Moral leadership has its basis in "the covenant" and the meaning of men's existence is "the divine will and purpose."¹⁹ Since "faith and love have profound implications for social justice and peace . . ."²⁰ then the Judeo-Christian ethic must be the basis for teaching moral leadership and men must deal with interpersonal relations and the moral dilemma in this manner. Leadership should be moral. If so, leadership and moral leadership could be the same. Dr. Roger Shinn said that these are related but not the same.²¹ We can say that moral responsibility, moral leadership and right human relations are interwoven.

Until man is perfect, we will have instances where principles are compromised, some breaches in professional ethics. Such lapses will happen at all levels of command. They do not indicate that professional ethics are no longer necessary, nor that the persons concerned are not trying to maintain their ethical positions."²²

If these points indicate anything, it is the need for further emphasis on moral leadership. If the Judeo-Christian

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ George F. Thomas, Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), pp. 3-4.

²⁰ Georgia Harkness, Christian Ethics (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957), pp. 101-103.

²¹ During meeting of the Moral Leadership Conference.

²² U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, Leadership and Management Course.

principle of right action toward, for and with our fellowmen is basic, then the Army Chaplain is in the unique role of proclaiming moral responsibility.

CHAPTER III

THE CHAPLAIN'S ROLE

The chaplain is in "a unique position to have an impact on the ethical dimensions of Army leadership," according to our Chief of Chaplains.²³ He will advise the commander in matters of religion, morals and moral leadership. The Chief further noted that military officers are turning to the chaplains "because they perceive the moral dimensions involved. . . ." in commanding.²⁴

The chaplain-instructor in the service school is important for moral leadership. Again Chaplain Hyatt said, "To change an organization you must influence the power structure. The Branch School is the place for this input." He added, "Newly trained officers know their weapons, their logistics, can identify problems of malfunctions and correct them, but are not taught about 'human malfunctions.' This is the basis for our involvement with the education of officers or NCO's."²⁵

Through moral education we can bring about proper "attitude formation and change"²⁶ in leadership. Much teaching

²³During meeting of the Moral Leadership Conference.

²⁴Ibid. ²⁵Ibid.

²⁶A. William Kay, Moral Development (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 253.

is done by the example of the teacher. Enthusiasm is most important in leadership. The chaplain need not provide a moral basis for war nor provide moral support for the military establishment. Moral leadership or professional ethics deals with leadership that is based on professionalism. It displays itself in assistance and counseling, social leadership and human relations in general.²⁷

The patterns of successful military leadership "make it clear that these leaders were made, not born."²⁸

Harkness implied that ethical principles can be taught; therefore, ethical or moral leadership can and must be taught.²⁹

²⁷During meeting of the Moral Leadership Conference.

²⁸Puryear, Nineteen Stars, p. 395.

²⁹Harkness, Christian Ethics, pp. 127-129.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Colonel Samuel H. Hays said, "It is not really necessary to compromise your principles and ideals. But you will find it a long, hard fight, with more defeats than victories your lot, unless you guide yourself closely by the principles of honor and the ethics of the military profession."³⁰

Some writers and speakers are not sure that we come from the Judeo-Christian Ethic and avoid answering the question: What is the basis for our ethic? This writer takes the Judeo-Christian Ethic as basic for the chaplain and his teachings or else he has no basis. Therefore, our definition is: Moral leadership is a human process which influences others (individuals or groups) to develop those ethical attitudes (characterized by a sense of responsibility) compatible with their life situation.

Being a minister seems to me to be the solution to moral leadership. This leadership can and must be taught.

³⁰U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Leadership and Management Course.

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